

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 1964

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SUBJ: RHODESIA: CALLAGHAN LETTER TO HUA KUO-FENG

REF: PEKING 1959

THE TEXT OF LETTER FROM PRIME MINISTER CALLAGHAN TO
PREMIER HUA KUO-FENG, DATED AUGUST 28, 1977, AND DELIVERED
AUGUST 30, 1977 (REFTEL), IS AS FOLLOWS:

BEGIN QUOTE:

I WANT TO INFORM YOU PERSONALLY ABOUT DEVELOPMENTS TOWARDS
A SETTLEMENT IN RHODESIA AT THE CRUCIAL STAGE.
YOU WILL KNOW THAT THE FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH SECRETARY,
MR. DAVID OWEN, AND THE US AMBASSADOR TO THE UN, MR.
ANDREW YOUNG, ARE NOW IN AFRICA TO PRESENT OUR DETAILED
PROPOSALS FOR A SETTLEMENT TO THE PARTIES CONCERNED. THEY
MET GENERAL OBASANJO IN LAGOS ON A 26 AUGUST AND THE
LEADERS OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT AND THE PRESIDENTS OF THE
FRONT LINE STATES IN LUSAKA ON 27 AUGUST. THEY ARE NOW
IN PRETORIA FOR MEETINGS WITH THE SOUTH AFRICAN
GOVERNMENT, AND WILL MEET IAN SMITH IN SALISBURY ON
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1 SEPTEMBER. WHILE THERE THEY WILL SEE THE OTHER
NATIONALIST LEADERS.
I HAVE BEEN MUCH ENCOURAGED TO LEARN FROM DAVID OWEN
THAT THE DISCUSSIONS WHICH HAVE TAKEN PLACE WITH THE
HEADS OF AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS AND WITH THE NATIONALIST
LEADERS SO FAR HAVE DEMONSTRATED VERY CLEARLY THAT
EVERYONE IS DEEPLY CONCERNED TO BRING ABOUT A SETTLE-

MENT OF THE RHODESIAN PROBLEM. OUR PROPOSALS ARE OBVIOUSLY REGARDED BY THEM AS A SERIOUS CONTRIBUTION TO THIS END. IT HAS BEEN ACCEPTED THAT WE ARE GENUINELY CONCERNED TO BRING ABOUT MAJORITY RULE AND TO ALLOW THE PEOPLE OF ZIMBABWE A FREE CHOICE IN THE SELECTION OF THEIR FUTURE LEADERS. WE ARE NOT ATTEMPTING TO IMPOSE A PUPPET REGIME. IT WAS ALSO HEARTENING TO ESTABLISH THAT GENERAL OBSANJO AND THE FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS ARE KEENLY AWARE OF THE NEED TO AVOID CIVIL WAR IN ZIMBABWE AND OF THE IMPORTANCE OF ENCOURAGING THOSE EUROPEANS TO STAY WHO ARE READY TO ACCEPT MAJORITY RULE AND TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE PROSPERITY OF THE COUNTRY.

WE INTEND TO COMMUNICATE THESE PROPOSALS TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL AND TO PUBLISH THEM.

THE BROAD OUTLINE OF OUR PROPOSALS IS AS FOLLOWS: THEY COVER THREE MAIN AREAS: THE INDEPENDENCE CONSTITUTION, ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION BEFORE INDEPENDENCE, AND AN INTERNATIONALLY SUPPORTED PROGRAMME OF DEVELOPMENT AID FOR ZIMBABWE (WHAT WE PROPOSE TO CALL THE "ZIMBABWE DEVELOPMENT FUND"). THESE THREE ELEMENTS ARE INTERDEPENDENT: THEY STAND OR FALL TOGETHER AND MUST BE JUDGED AS A WHOLE. AS WE SEE IT, THE INDEPENDENCE CONSTITUTION SHOULD

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PROVIDE FOR A DEMOCRATIC FORM OF GOVERNMENT, WITH ELECTIONS FIRMLY BASED ON THE PRINCIPLE OF UNIVERSAL ADULT SUFFRAGE. WE BELIEVE ALSO THAT THERE SHOULD BE A JUSTICIABLE BILL OF RIGHTS AND INDEPENDENT JUDICIARY. I AM GLAD TO SAY THAT THESE PROPOSALS HAVE WON THE ACCEPTANCE OF ALL THE NATIONALIST LEADERS, INCLUDING MR. NKOMO AND MR. MUGABE. IT WILL COME AS NO SURPRISE TO YOU TO LEARN THAT THE PRINCIPLE OF UNIVERSAL ADULT SUFFRAGE HAS NOT YET BEEN ACCEPTED BY MR. SMITH, THOUGH WE BELIEVE HE CAN BE PERSUADED TO ACCEPT IT - IN ANY EVENT FOR US IT IS NOT A MATTER OF NEGOTIATION.

THE PROPOSED ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE TRANSITION PERIOD ARE ALSO INCLUDED. IF ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE CONTROL OF LAW AND ORDER CAN BE AGREED THAT ARE SATISFACTORY TO THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WE WOULD BE READY, IN FULFILMENT OF OUR RESPONSIBILITY FOR RHODESIA, TO APPOINT A BRITISH RESIDENT COMMISSIONER DURING THIS PERIOD. IT WILL ALSO BE HIS TASK TO ORGANISE THE PRE-INDEPENDENCE ELECTIONS, WITH A PERIOD OF SIX MONTHS. WE SHALL ASK THAT THE BRITISH COMMISSIONER BE ASSISTED

BY A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY-GENERAL AND WE SHALL BE SEEKING AGREEMENT TO A UNITED NATIONS MILITARY PRESENCE. THE PRECISE NATURE AND ROLE OF THE UNITED NATIONS PRESENCE WOULD HAVE TO BE WORKED OUT AND AGREED IN ADVANCE BETWEEN THE PARTIES CONCERNED AND THE UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY-GENERAL, AN WILL, OF COURSE, BE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL.

OUR INTENTION IS TO INVITE DR. ALDHEIM, SUBJECT T THE AGREEMENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL, TO APPOINT A REPRESENTATIVE (NOT NECESSARILY THE FUTURE UN SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE DURING THE TRANSITION PERIOD) TO CONSULT WITH OUR RESIDENT COMMISSIONER-DESIGNATE AND THE CONFIDENTIAL

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PARTIES CONCERNED, ON THE VITALLY IMPORTANT MATTER OF ESTABLISHING IN DETAIL THE RESPECTIVE ROLES OF ALL THE ARMED FORCES IN RHODESIA. IT WOULD BE UNACCEPTABLE TO LEAVE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ENSURING LAW AND ORDER SOLELY IN THE HANDS OF THE EXISTING RHODESIAN FORCES, EVEN UNDER NEW COMMAND. EQUALLY, HOWEVER, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT IT WOULD BE PRACTICABLE TO ENTRUST THIS TASK TO THE FORCES OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT ALONE. MOREOVER, IN PRACTICAL TERMS, ANY NEW ARRANGEMENTS WILL TAKE TIME TO PUT INTO EFFECT ON THE GROUND.

FINALLY, AS REGARDS THE ZIMBABWE DEVELOPMENT FUND, I WANT TO EMPHASISE THAT IT WOULD BE DEVELOPMENTAL IN CHARACTER. THERE CAN BE NO QUESTION OF BUYING OUT THE EUROPEANS, NOR OF COMPENSATING THE WHITE RHODESIANS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CHANGES TO BRING ABOUT INDEPENDENCE ON THE BASIS OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT, AND A RETURN TO LEGALITY. BUT WE SEE THE FUND AS UNDERPINNING THE SETTLEMENT GENERALLY; THE AMERICAN AND OURSELVES ARE AGREED THAT ITS ESTABLISHMENT AND CONTINUED OPERAION SHOULD BE PREDICATED UPON THE ACCEPTANCE AND OBSERVANCE OF THE TERMS OF THE SETTLEMENT AS A WHOLE.

I HOPE THAT WHEN WE PUT OUR PROPOSALS FOR A SETTLEMENT TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL WE SHALL BE ABLE TO COUNT ON YOUR SUPPORT. I FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT THE TERMS WE SHALL BE PUTTING FORWARD FOR A SETTLEMENT ARE FAIR AND EQUITABLE AND THAT ALTHOUGH THEY WILL NOT COMMAND INSTANT ASSENT FROM ALL PARTIES IN EVERY RESPECT, THEY REPRESENT, TAKEN AS A WHOLE, A JUST SOLUTION TO THE RHODESIAN PROBLEMA NAD WOLD GIVE THE CONFIDENTIAL

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PEOPLE OF THE NEW ZIMBABWE A SUCCESSFUL START AS A
FREE INDEPENDENT COUNTRY WITH A VIABLE FUTURE.

YOURS SINCERELY

JAMES CALLAGHAN. END QUOTE..

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